



# The South India CHURCHMAN

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The Magazine of the Church of South India

● APRIL 1990

*'Jesus Christ is risen today—Halleluya'*



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*Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.*

## The South India CHURCHMAN

*The Magazine of the Church of South India*

**APRIL 1990**

### EDITOR

**THE REV. DASS BABU**  
MEGH DEEP APARTMENTS,  
MAYURI MARG,  
BEGUMPET,  
HYDERABAD-500 016. (A.P.) Phone: 847436

### HON. BUSINESS MANAGER

**PROF. GEORGE KOSHY, General Secretary**  
*Synod Secretaries*  
POST BOX No. 4906, CATHEDRAL ROAD, MADRAI-600 086  
Phone: 471266

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### HON. AGENT IN U.K.

**Rev. I. L. Thomas**  
11, CARTERET STREET, LONDON SW1H 9DL  
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## 25 Years Ago!

The pass or pisah with which the Christian festival is connected is familiar to the readers of the Old Testament. It is a Jewish festival which again commemorated with deliverance of the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage. The first Christians continued to observe the Jewish festivals, but in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which they foreshadowed. Thus Passover with a new conception added to it, if Christ as the true Paschal lamb slain and also risen from the dead, 'as the first-fruits of them that are sleep', informed the celebration of the Christian Easter.

—Churchman 19

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# COME HOLY SPIRIT.... the Spirit of Power



*"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit Comes upon you"*

(Acts. 1 : 8)

Two words for power recur in the New Testament. One means authority and the other signifies dynamic force. Our Lord promised the disciples an ability, a capacity, a potency and a dynamism by means of which they would become altogether different from what they had been before. Power in this context is the dynamic force. They would of course exercise that power under authority of the Lord who said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth' (Matt. 28 : 18). Under such authority they would have liberation into a new dimension of power. This is nothing less than the dynamism of the Holy Spirit of God.

The Spirit does not work alone. The selfish nature has to be changed to release the real power. The rock of self may have to be struck hard to release the strength-giving Living Waters. One may have to go through a tunnel to get to the light. Power can be switched on or switched off. It depends on the person what he chooses to do. The Spirit does not release men from human afflictions but he does provide help and courage to meet them.

It is for this that God created man and woman. God made man 'to have dominion'. In our fallen state we still lust after power. The history of man is the struggle for power. The eagerness to possess things and to hold others under our control is common to us all. Babylon stands in the Bible as symbol of all the crude lust of huma-

nity for power. Babel was intended to reach to heaven and thereby its builders would hold power that would forever endure. Satan's temptation of our first parents in the Garden was to their hunger for power. 'You will be like gods'. (Gen. 3 : 5)

Power, however, was lost when man sinned. Made by God for the heights, man became a groveller in the mire and mists of a stricken earth. That is the entail of sin. If we are to know again the power for which God in the beginning made us, we must come under the authority of Him to whom belong the kingdom, the power and glory. If this is to be, we must part company with the devil and all his works. His doctrine is that might is right, that nothing must stand between man and his desire, that assertion of self is the only way of self-realization, and that the passion to get and hold is over spring of action. But that is not God's way. The Cross is God's way. The way to sovereignty is by the way of Calvary. The cross leads to the crown. It is also the pathway to Pentecost.

No man can do what he ought to do according to his ability without the power to accomplish it. And this Christ promises by His Holy Spirit. 'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you' (Acts 1 : 8). Our Lord told the apostles plainly that the indwelling spirit would be in them in all prevailing source of power. In



Him their greatest need would be fully met. The Holy Spirit would come upon them and thereby new vitality, energy, and spiritual power would be theirs. God's Spirit is always associated in the scriptures with elemental force. He brooded over the darkness of the deep in the first of times and there emerged an ordered creation. In a similar way He came upon men chosen by God in the Old Testament times and they were endowed with the kind of power they needed to do God's bidding. As the prophets looked down the corridors of time, they saw a day when the divine breath would come upon God's children and mighty things would be done. It is this that happened at Pentecost. An explosive force was released whose reverberations have been felt down the centuries, changing the whole direction of world culture and civilisation. His explosive power erupts in the individual. It is unfelt and unheard, but by it the self is raised to a new dimension and given supernatural

powers which enable it to reach beyond the world to eternity. The Spirit brings God into human lives. 'Know you not that you are the temples of God and the Spirit of God dwells within you,' wrote St. Paul. His presence affects the whole quality of life, giving it dignity and worth.

The atmosphere of the New Testament Church is charged with power. Power of speech, power of miracle, power to pray, power to live victoriously, power to quench the fiery darts of the evil one, power for battle, power to die. Since then wonders accompanied the disciples' testimony. Disease fled at their touch. Rulers trembled in their presence. The church was inspired, empowered, and triumphant because of the fullness of Holy Spirit. We may well lament the absence of this power in the Church today, but the Holy Spirit waits to anoint with power all those who truly seek Him.

## I OFFER MYSELF FOR YOUR SERVICE

1

Bestow upon me O Lord  
Your Spirit  
that would make me  
dedicate myself  
for your service.

Kindle in me  
the spark of self-sacrifice  
and make me offer myself  
for the salvation of people  
who perish.

2

Dear Lord,  
I have known your  
precious sufferings, your tears  
and the spirit of sacrifice  
which revealed your love when you bore the heavy cross.

My heart was melted by that Love.  
But I do not want to stop  
with these vain words of confession.  
I give my whole self to You  
for use in your service.

3

Lord, Jesus,  
The whole world is yours !  
But still  
You wandered from place to place  
doing good to all.  
I do not find any means  
excepting your cross  
to render my service  
by renouncing all for you  
and receiving your spirit for my strength.

In this Lyric (Christian Lyrics, 329) Dr. Jesudasan speaks about his commitment to serve Christ as a result of the inspiration he received from the Cross.

— Originally written in Tamil by Dr. Savarirayan Jesudasan and translated into English by Dr. T. Dayanandan Francis.



# *New Future for All People*

## A MESSAGE FOR EASTER

VICTOR PREMASAGAR

On Easter day we rejoice and praise God that Jesus is risen from the dead. Death is overcome with life—The disciples, who were shattered on the Good Friday without hope and without a future, suddenly found on Easter Day, new hope and new future for themselves and for the whole human kind.

St. Paul again and again speaks of the resurrection and the power of the resurrection. The power of the resurrection is God creating a new hope and a new future when everything seems humanly impossible. The Biblical narratives tell of the acts of God in times of crises—making a way through the Red sea when the Israelites were pursued by the Egyptians, liberating them through a judge or a king, when their enemies oppressed and surrounded them, sending his message of comfort and return to Jerusalem, when they were in exile, enslaved and without hope. This resurrection hope is experienced by the Christian Church bringing assurance of a new future for them and for nations.

The greatest miracle of Easter is the power it released for new hope and new future for all people. The Resurrection is not only in life after death but also here and now bringing hope to the outcasts and marginalised communities in every nation—slaves have been given hope of release, the captives, freedom, the outcasts dignity and human values for a new life: the marginals recovered hope to enter into the main stream of life in community sharing in the

resources and possibilities of human growth and development. The Resurrection is the assurance of God's power and action in every situation of hopelessness.

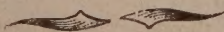
The risen Jesus sends out his disciples on his Father's mission. St. John writes about Jesus appearance to the disciples in the Upper Room, bringing a new vision and sending them out on mission (John 19 : 20-22). John writes of three things that happened in that encounter.

The disciples were glad. Jesus breathed on them the Holy Spirit with the words 'As the Father hath sent me so send I you'. He showed them the marks of his wounds in his hands and his feet.

This was the power they received from the Master for action in the world but with empty hands—marks of the cross and the resurrected Lord.

Jesus sends us with the same bidding in the power of the Holy Spirit. His empty hands challenge the Church to follow the path of his Cross and the Resurrection.

Easter releases new power into the lives of people—bringing hope, courage and power for action. The Church shares this hope and power and as the Messianic community in each context, bringing new hope of resurrection to all.





# EASTER

REV. DAVID, G.—*Madras*  
*Letters to a young questioner*

Dear Rajkumar,

I have your recent letter at hand, and I thank you for feeling free to ask so many questions. I do not pretend to have all the answers. But I will try to treat your questions honestly. Maybe, in the end, I will benefit more than you. For that I should be grateful!

You asked how I can believe in the story, or the doctrine of the Resurrection. Aren't there plenty of stories of dying and rising gods? Isn't it suspicious that Easter coincides with Spring in the North Temperate zone, with all the implications of celebrating the return of life?

Let me begin by admitting how marvelously conservative the common religious memory is. One example is the way that holy places remain holy places throughout all the changes of history. Countless places today occupied by a temple, church or shrine were probably revered ages ago by people of some other persuasion. Even the way we sometimes build our churches, aligning them with the Easter sunrise may reflect an unconscious memory of a pre-Christian response to the movement of the sun!

Yes, Kumar, you are probably right in suspecting that it is not too much of a coincidence that Easter occurs so near to March 21st (when the sun is crossing the equator and 'coming north'). In many places in traditional Christendom Easter has become little more than a celebration of warmth and life after the cold and 'death' of Winter.

That common 'religious memory' in the human race probably accounts for the way that similar visual and verbal symbols pop up again and again as we try to make sense out of human experience. For example, light vs. darkness, life vs. death. It seems inevitable that Easter must be associated with dawn and sunrise!

\* \* \* \*

Dear Rajkumar,

You mentioned in your earlier letter those myths about dying and rising gods that were circulating 2000 years ago. Yes, I think the idea would not have been strange or abhorrent to many Gentiles. Even the Jews, when they sang some of their Psalms may have dimly realized that back in the dim past there lay national rituals in which the king, symbolizing God, returns to his throne, perhaps coming from the realm of death where he had been during a time of drought and famine!

'So why,' you ask, 'is Easter any different or any more important than, say, New Year's Day?' You said that you had noticed that in many C.S.I. churches New Year's Day is celebrated with more hope and fervour than are

the more patently Christian festivals! Easter seems almost redundant because in January we have already looked forward to a new year, new endeavours, new blessings and experiences of grace, perhaps within the context of a renewed Covenant.

Well, Kumar, I like your questions. You are thinking, and you are making me think, too!

Let me approach your questions by recalling something that happened to me long ago. When I was your age, I faced an interview with a panel of senior pastors who were considering my claim that I had a 'call' to the ministry and that I should be accepted as a 'probationer'. I remember two things from that interview. The first was how cool, almost hostile the pastors seemed! I thought they would be happy to meet a young man wanting to join their profession. But they seemed to be so reserved, not enthusiastic at all! The second was the only question that I remember, asked by a crusty old pastor 'Young man, is your religion *experiential*?' I was not quite sure what he meant, and I do not remember how I answered. But I do understand now what I wanted to know.

He wanted to know if my Christian faith was my own or was it just second-hand, somebody else's. Was I opting for Christian service because of a personal compulsion, or only because my parents wanted a pastor for the family?

And that brings me to Easter! The festival of the Resurrection! As far as I can see, if there was, or no Resurrection, then there is no Christian hope, and no real Christianity! Easter has to do with real experience.

Raj, you asked me if Easter was not just another typical religious myth, a kind of sanctified wishful-thinking merely reflecting the changing season. No, emphatically, it is not! Ask yourself, or I will ask you! What is the experience that Easter reflects? I said 'reflects' because the human fact is that we have to express our experience in inadequate language, like the moon reflecting the light of the sun that has been reflected to it from the east. But behind the symbols and mythic language and doctrines we try to formulate lie the initial experiences. So, what was, or is, that Easter experience that is too full for the symbols to contain?

Kumar, you were right when you said the other that it is not just about an empty tomb, as if that were a satisfying proof. The New Testament writers really thought that. They recorded the doubts and counter-claims of the officials—and did not waste much time on them.

There is a fascinating discussion in one of my books about the way Jesus' headcloth was apparently left in



in the tomb. It is very intriguing, as is the semi-scientific speculations of another writer about the molecular make-up of Jesus' resurrection body. But, actually, those discussions do not do much to strengthen my faith !

I think the story of Jesus walking with and finally breaking bread with the disciples in Emmaus gets much closer to what Easter is all about. The experience of the resurrection, their Lord's and their own, was like that of the disciples gathered in the room on the day of Pentecost. That electrifying transformation of the hopeless, defeated, despairing disciples into revolutionary, courageous agents of the power of God to turn the world upside down—that is the experience behind the doctrine.

\* \* \* \*

Dear Rajkumar,

'What has that got to do with us?' was your response to my last outburst of enthusiasm. Raj, it would not have anything to do with us if it were only something that happened once in history, sometime long ago. The stupendous thing is that it keeps on happening. For those original disciples the experience of Jesus' life coursing through their own lives was a vindication of all that they had seen in him before the crucifixion: the righteous anger, the tender compassion, the demands of his Kingdom ethic, his full humanity. The disciples, had, after all, seen through him into the heart of God. What he lived and died for were eternally true, and all the negating, destructive, death-dealing power of self-assertion, greed, callousness and perversity would never prevail.

I said it keeps happening. People still experience Christ's Resurrection. Sometimes they call it the presence of God. Sometimes they call it the work of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes they call it Communion, or encouragement, or forgiveness, acceptance or revival. Not always is it as dramatic as Pentecost. Probably most of the time it is a quiet, almost overlooked experience of living life daily with hope and confidence—assuming that life has meaning !

\* \* \* \*

Dear Raj,

Once again you pulled me up. Yes, you are right, lots of people live and act as if they were sure that 'life has meaning'. But, of course, I'm speaking of the meaning that Jesus has given it. I have a neighbour who thinks that living means getting all you can get while the getting is good. Another friend of mine is struggling with so many off his daughters. Life has desperate meaning for him.

But suppose life were meant to be lived out not by selfish compulsion, or goaded by duty, but in gratitude: how would that effect the way it was lived and the definition of success? Suppose one discovered that Jesus does open up to us the very heart of God to the point of suffering and dying so that we could experience the truth. Suppose that that death is not the end of the revelation, but that the 'Truth' is a living, available source for creative living today. Suppose I am talking about Easter.

\* \* \* \*

Dear Rajkumar,

Yes, pull me back down to earth; I was flying pretty high! You have sobered me with your question: 'What about creeds and doctrines? Don't they sometimes get in the way of 'the experience'?'

Yes, sometimes they do! Because, after all, they are human attempts to express something that is almost too weird or wonderful to put into down-to-earth prosaic words. That is why we often sing our theology better than we preach it! Song and poetry are more congenial ways to reflect the wonder of God.

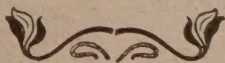
Nevertheless, we ought to use our God-given minds to try to understand, to share, and, if you will, to safeguard the experience, while being open to further truth. That is what doctrines and creeds ought to be for. They point to the wonderful treasures of faith-experience and say in effect, 'Don't lose them; don't settle for anything less.'

But, because our creeds and doctrines are human products, even when guided by the Holy Spirit, often drawing on symbols and formulations buried in the human memory, they should always be perceived as being tentative statements. People have cursed people and fought and died over creeds. They know how important were the issues to which the creeds pointed. But they overlooked the imperfections inherent in human formulations. That doesn't mean we stop trying! Rather, we need always to be struggling to produce our own personal statements of faith, testing them against the biblical witness, against the statements of others, and asking, 'What is the experience behind the words? What is *my* experience?'

Dear friend, I hope you will discover the resurrecting, transforming, reviving power of God working in your life.

Easter has to do with that.

Yours sincerely  
DAVID, G.





# Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

## AFFIRMATIONS

### Introduction

In this world marked by injustice, violence and degradation of the environment we want to reaffirm God's covenant which is open to all and holds the promise of life in wholeness and right relationships. Responding to God's covenant we profess our faith in the Triune God who is the very source of communion.

Our response to the covenant today leads us to make the following affirmations on urgent issues where justice, peace and the integrity of creation are at stake. They represent firm convictions that have grown out of years of ecumenical dialogue and struggle.

We make these affirmations as Christian people being aware that many people of living faiths and ideologies share these concerns with us and are guided by their understanding of JPIC. We, therefore, seek dialogue and cooperation with them, guided by a vision of the new future which is necessary for the survival of our planet.

We can only make these affirmations as we acknowledge our short-comings and failures and commit ourselves anew to the reality of God's reign. This means to resist in thought, word and action the powers of separation and destruction and to live in active solidarity with the suffering people.

### Affirmation I

#### We affirm that all exercise of power is accountable to God

The world belongs to God. Therefore, all forms of human power and exercise of authority should serve God's purposes in the world and are answerable to the people on whose behalf they are exercised. Those who wield power—economic, political, military, social, scientific, cultural, legal—must be stewards of God's justice and peace. In Christ, God's power is demonstrated in redemptive suffering, as compassionate love which identifies itself with the broken and suffering humanity. This empowers people to resist injustice, to struggle against the powers of death and to proclaim the message of liberation, love and hope which offers new life.

Therefore we *affirm* that all forms of human power and authority are subject to God and accountable to people. In Christ, God decisively redefined the meaning of power as compassionate love that prevails over the forces of death.

We *will resist* any exercise of power and authority which tries to monopolize power and so prohibits processes of transformation for justice, peace and integrity of creation.

The World Council of Churches organised World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in Seoul, Korea from 4th to 12th March '90.

Rt. Rev. William Moses, Bishop, Coimbatore Diocese,  
Dr. Peter Jayapandyan, the Principal, American College, Madurai,  
Mrs. Sowmani, Treasurer, C.S-I Women Fellowship represented the Church of South India.

We *commit* ourselves to support the creative power of people's movements in their struggle for human dignity and liberation and the achievement of just and participatory form of government.

### Affirmation II

#### We affirm God's option for the poor

The poor are the exploited and oppressed. Their poverty is not accidental. It is a result of deliberate policies which result in the constantly increasing accumulation of wealth and power. Poverty is a scandal and a crime. It is blasphemy to say that it is the will of God. Jesus came that we should have 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). The lives of poor people are constantly at risk. That is why God shows a preferential option for the poor. The glory of God is the poor person fully alive. In the cries of the poor we hear the challenging voice of God.

Jesus describes the poor as 'the least' of his brothers and sisters (Matthew 25). In our time, the needs of the least can only be met by fundamentally transforming the world economy through structural change. Charity and aided projects cannot meet the needs and protect the dignity of the world's poorest billion people of whom women and children are the majority.

We *affirm* God's preferential option for the poor and the duty of Christians to defend the life of the poor.

We *will resist* all forces, policies and institutions which create and perpetuate poverty or accept it as inevitable and ineradicable.

We *commit* ourselves to work through our churches strengthen those organisations and efforts which are dedicated to achieving the eradication of exploitation and oppression.

### Affirmation III

#### We affirm the equal value of all races and peoples

In Jesus Christ, God has reconciled with God and with each other all people of whatever race or ethnic descent. Discriminating against human beings and persecuting them because of their ethnic descent, caste or race is a violation of their human dignity as well as a renunciation of the rich diversity of God's design for the world. Forms of racism—whether in the individual or collective—must be named sin and their theological justification heresy. Therefore remembering the Covenant of God who declares 'All the families of the earth are mine'.

We *affirm* that people of every race, caste and ethnic group are of equal value. In the very diversity of the cultures and traditions, they reflect the rich plurality of God's creation.

We *will resist* the denial of the rights of human beings who are members of exploited and oppressed races.



ethnic, caste or indigenous groups. We will resist attempts by dominant cultures and groups to deprive them of their cultural identity, full citizenship and equal access to economic, social, political and ecclesial power. We will resist the oppression and exploitation of women and children who are the most painfully affected.

We therefore *commit* ourselves to stand in solidarity and support the victims of racism, ethnicism and casteism and their struggle.

#### *Affirmation IV*

**We affirm that male and female are created in the image of God**

In God's image God created male and female (Gen. 1:27). This creation in God's image is the basis for a dynamic relationship between women and men for the transformation of society. Christ affirmed the personhood of women and empowered them to a life of dignity and fullness. Women with men, as 'new creation in Christ' (2 Cor. 5:17), must work towards a world where all forms of discrimination are eliminated. Therefore, as we remember the Covenant of God, who is both father and mother to all.

We *affirm* the creative power given to women to stand or life wherever there is death. In Jesus' community women find acceptance and dignity and with them he shared the imperative to carry the good news.

We *will resist* structures of patriarchy which perpetuate violence against women in their homes and in a society which has exploited their labour and sexuality. Within this we pay special attention to the most vulnerable women - those who are poor and/or black, Dalits, members of indigenous communities, refugees, migrant workers and women of other oppressed groups. We resist all structures of dominance which exclude the theological and spiritual contributions of women and deny their participation in decision-making processes in church and society.

Therefore, encouraged by the persistence of women in their struggles for life, all over the world, we *commit* ourselves to seek ways of realizing a new community of women and men.

#### *Affirmation V*

**We affirm that truth is the foundation of a community of free people**

Jesus Christ lived a life of truthfulness. In living God's truth he got into conflict with the values and powers of his society. He communicated his message of truth to the people through simple language, images and examples.

Communication is indeed one of the greatest gifts of God. It relates and binds individuals together into communities and communities into the one human family. Communication in the service of justice, peace and the integrity of creation carries an awe-inspiring responsibility for the future.

These are things you shall do : Speak the truth to one another and make for peace, tells the prophet' (Zachariah 8:16).

Today, new technologies offer possibilities of wider communication and education for all. At the same time they threaten the true purpose of communication. Propaganda, misinformation and sheer falsehood face us : Therefore, as we reaffirm the covenant with the God of the truth that sets us free.

We *affirm* that access to truthful communication is a basic human right. All people have the right to tell their own stories, speak their own convictions and beliefs, to be heard by others and to distinguish truth from falsehood.

We *will resist* policies that further the concentration of the media of communication in the hands of the state or of economically powerful monopolies, and that tolerate the spread of falsehood and divide communities.

We *commit* ourselves to communicate the Gospel of truth through modern media in imaginative, prophetic and liberating ways, to create ways by means of which the vulnerable and silenced may make themselves heard.

#### *Affirmation VI*

**We affirm the peace of Jesus Christ**

The only possible basis for lasting peace is justice. The prophetic vision of peace with justice is this :

'They shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks ;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more ;  
but they shall sit every (one) under (their) vine and  
under his fig tree,  
and none shall make them afraid ;  
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken '

(Micah 4 : 3-4).

Jesus said : 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (Matthew 5 : 9). We have to discern what it entails to be makers of peace : the conscious acceptance of vulnerability.

God's justice is to protect of 'the least' (Matthew 25:31-46), those who are the most vulnerable (Deut. 24). God is the defender of the poor (Amos 5).

There can be no peace without justice (Isaiah 32 : 17). It is not the defence of the state. It is the protection of the lives and quality of life of all the people, particularly those who are most at risk. Security must recognise the security needs of others. Security at the cost of the environment is no security.

We *affirm* the full meaning of God's peace (shalom). We seek every possible means of establishing justice, achieving peace and solving conflicts by active non-violence.

We *will resist* doctrines of security based on the use of and deterrence by all weapons of mass destruction, as well as doctrines of national security which are aimed at the control and suppression of the people in order to protect the privileges of the few.

We *commit* ourselves to peace with justice. We therefore will work actively to develop a culture of non-violence assuring structures in and between societies which will protect the lives of all people and guarantee the rule of justice.

#### *Affirmation VII*

**We affirm the creation as beloved of God**

As creator, God is the source and sustainer of the whole cosmos. God loves the creation. Its mysterious ways, its life, its dynamism all reflect the glory of its creator.

Because God created humanity and all other living creatures, life is sacred.



Biblical statements, i.e. 'to have dominion' and 'subdue the earth' have been used through the centuries to justify destructive actions toward the creation, but in our time we have come to see that humanity is part of God's creation with special responsibility as servants reflecting God's creating and sustaining love.

Today, the world, human and non-human, is in danger because humanity has failed to love the living earth and has plundered it as if it were created for our selfish purposes.

We affirm that the world as God's handiwork has its own inherent integrity; the land, water, air, forests, mountains and all creatures, including humanity, are 'good' in God's sight. The integrity of creation has a social aspect.

We will resist the claim that anything in creation is merely a resource for human expectation; species extinction for human benefit; consumerism; pollution of air and bodies of water; destructive changes in the air that threaten the climate; and policies and plans which contribute to the disintegration of integrity.

Therefore, we commit ourselves both to be members of the living community of creation in which we are but one species and members of the Covenant community of Christ, hence, co-workers with God, with moral responsibility to respect, conserve and work for the integrity of creation.

#### *Affirmation VIII*

##### **We affirm that the land belongs to God**

The earth is a gift of God. The land and the seas provide life to people—indeed, to all that lives, now and for the future. But millions are deprived of land, and their cultures and lives are destroyed. They await the promise for the meek to inherit the earth. When there is justice in the land, the fields and forests and every living thing will dance and sing for joy (Ps. 96 : 11-12). Therefore :

We affirm that the land belongs to God. Human use of land and sea should release the earth to regularly replenish its life-giving power, protecting its integrity and providing spaces for its creatures.

We will resist any policy that treats land merely as a marketable commodity, that allows speculation at the expense of the poor, that promotes the exploitation, unequal distribution or contamination of the land, or that prevents those who live directly from the land from being its real trustees.

Therefore we commit ourselves to join in solidarity with indigenous communities struggling for their cultures and rights to land and sea, with peasants and poor farmers seeking land reform, and to respect the ecological space of other living creatures.

#### *Affirmation IX*

##### **We affirm the dignity and commitment of the younger generation**

Jesus was very much aware of the younger generation. His indication that unless we become like little children we cannot enter into the kingdom of God (Lk. 18 : 17) and Paul's call on Timothy not to allow anyone to despise

him because of his youth (1 Tim. 4 : 12) implies a challenge to society to build human communities which, with wonder and curiosity, playfulness and vulnerability, with heart, soul and body ensures the continuity of generations in the love of God. Poverty, injustice and the debt crisis hit children hard through dislocation of families, forcing them into work at an early age just to survive, putting them at risk to malnutrition or even survival. Millions of children, particularly the girl child, have no security in order to enjoy their childhood. Therefore :

We affirm the dignity of the younger generation which derives from their particular vulnerability, and need for nurturing love ;

the creative and sacrificial role that the younger generation are playing in building a new society, recognizing their right to have a voice in the structures that affect their life and their community ;

the rights and needs of the younger generation as basic for establishing educational and developmental priorities.

We will resist any policy or authority which, out of fear or presumption of superiority, marginalizes the younger generation, including conscription against their conscience which abuses and exploits them for commercial interests such as through drug-trafficking.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to our responsibility as parents and friends of the young generation ; to creating the conditions which enable all parents to care for their children ; and to support the search of the young generation for self-actualisation and living out a life of hope and faith in Christ Jesus.

#### *Affirmation X*

##### **We affirm that human rights are given by God**

There is an inseparable relationship between justice and human rights. Human rights have their source in God's justice, which relates to an enslaved, marginalized suffering people in concrete acts of deliverance from oppression (Ex. 3 : 7b). The term 'human rights' must clearly be understood to refer not only to individual rights but also to the collective social, economic and cultural rights of peoples, such as the right to land and its resources to one's own ethnic and racial identity and to the exercise of religious and political freedom. The right to sovereign and self-determination for peoples to work out their own models of development and to live free of fear and freedom of manipulation is a fundamental human right which should be respected, likewise the rights of women and children to a life free of violence in home and society.

We affirm that human rights are God-given and their promotion and protection are essential for freedom, justice and peace.

We will resist all structures and systems that violate human rights and deny the opportunity for the realisation of the full potential of individuals and peoples ; in particular torture, disappearances and extra-judicial execution and the death penalty.

We commit ourselves to actions of solidarity with organisations and movements working for the promotion and protection of human rights ; we will work for the acceptance and full implementation of human rights standards through effective instruments.



# World Convocation on Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation, Seoul, Korea, March 1990

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1. Now is the time to commit ourselves with God and one another. The moment of history is unique. All life on earth is threatened by injustice, war and destruction of creation because we have broken God's covenant. Knowing of the opportunities that are offered to us, we ask for God's forgiveness. We witness hopeful changes.
2. Now is the time to welcome and confirm the achievements in linking local and regional struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Our contexts and perceptions are different indeed. Yet we have to overcome our divisions. Among them we must encourage wider support of the churches for people's movements. There are no competitive efforts for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. There is one single global struggle.
3. Now is the time to consolidate all struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We must free ourselves from bondage to power structures which blind us and make us accomplices in the destruction. Christians have to leave the protecting walls of the church and move out into the world to which Jesus came.
4. Now is the time we must join the struggle of the Korean people for reunification and support their plea and prayer for a year of jubilee in 1995.
5. Now is the time the ecumenical movement needs a greater sense of binding, mutual commitment and solidarity in word and action. It is the promise of God's covenant for our time and our world to which we respond. Thus we affirm :
  - that all exercise of power is accountable to God ;
  - God's option for the poor ;
  - the equal value of all races and peoples ;
  - that male and female are created in the image of God ;
  - that truth is the foundation of a community of free people ;
  - the peace of Jesus Christ ;
  - the creation is beloved of God ;
  - that the land belongs to God ;
  - the dignity and commitment of the younger generation ;
  - that human rights are given by God.
6. Now is the time for the ecumenical movement to articulate its vision of all people living on earth and caring for creation as a family where each

member has the same right to wholeness of life. While this vision is spiritual in nature it must be expressed in concrete action. On the basis of our spiritual experience here in Seoul we have committed ourselves to work for :

- a just economic order and for liberation from the bondage of the foreign debt
- for the true security of all nations and peoples and for a culture of non-violence
- for preserving the gift of the earth's atmosphere and for building a culture that can live in harmony with creation's integrity.

7. Now is the time to recognise that there is a long process still before us. We will take to our churches and our movements the affirmations and commitments we have made in Seoul, inviting others to join us. Together with them we struggle for the realisation of our vision. We are accountable to one another and to God. We pray that we do not miss the kairos to which we have been led by God.

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## WANTED

for

Christ Church Boys' Higher Secondary School  
Jabalpur. A Principal/Vice-Principal with proficiency in English language and teaching experience in English Medium Higher Secondary Classes. Administrative experience will be preferred.

*Qualifications :—*Trained Post graduate.

Application should reach the Chairman, on or before 10th May, 1990 along with complete Bio-data, and photo copies of all Certificates.

Chairman  
Nagpur Diocesan Board of Education  
Jabalpur  
Church of North India  
1033, Napier Town  
Jabalpur, M.P.



# LORD'S SUPPER

REV. DR. P. G. KURUVILLA, *Trivandrum*

## Text 1 Cor. 11 : 23-26

In the Universal Church there is a consensus concerning the Holy Eucharist as the central act of worship. The New Testament scholars tell us that what we have in 1 Cor. 11 : 23-26 is the earliest record of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament. Whenever and wherever we celebrate the Lord's Supper whether it is during the 22nd Synod meeting of the CSI or in a poor village in a very remote part in India we remember Jesus Christ.

We remember him who said, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me' (Mat. 16 : 24). We remember him who said, 'Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me ; . . . and you will find rest for your souls' (Mt. 11 : 28-29). And we remember him who said, 'Let not your hearts be troubled ; believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms ; if it were not so, would I have told you . . .' (Jn. 14 : 1-2).

We remember Jesus of Nazareth.

But it is not the remembrance of a lifeless past in the present. For example, Alexander the great crossed the river Danube. I do not know if he did it. If he did it, the remembrance of that event in the present is the remembrance of a lifeless past as we are concerned.

The Church affirms about the person of Christ, 'he is God of God, light of light, very God of very God . . .'. In the Lord's Supper it is neither the bishop nor the pastor who celebrate it who invites us to the Lord's table. It is the Lord of the Church who is the host and it is he who invites us to share in the Lord's supper. We all are his unworthy guests.

(Contd. from p. 15)

as Theological Commission, Liturgical Commission, CNI-CSI-Mar Thomā Church Joint Council, CNI-MCI Union Negotiations Committee, World Council of Churches' Central Committee. Bishop Santram, married to Lata, has three children.

## WITHDRAW TELEVISION PLAY 'VICTORIA FRANCIS' : DEMANDS PCPA

ISLAMABAD—At the Fourth Executive Body meeting of the Pakistan Catholic Press Association (PCPA) held at St. Mary's Seminary Lahore on February 2, demanded the Pakistan television to withdraw the decision of telecasting the play 'Victoria Francis' as its plot and major character are not in keeping with the Christian faith.

The PCPA also said that the controversial lesson on Jesus Christ in the book of 'Ikhlāqiat' (Ethics) for non-

In some churches the Lord's supper is called the Holy Communion. This title communion for the Lord's supper is found in 1 Cor. 10 : 16 and it means 'sharing together'. We give ourselves and our lives to the Lord Jesus and he through the outward symbols of bread and wine gives himself to us in them. By faith we have communion with the risen Christ and also we have communion with our fellow believers. In the second part of the CSI liturgy we have 'the Peace'. This corresponds with the kiss of peace of the Apostolic church (1 Thess. 5 : 26) and is the sign of our affection on for another in Christ.

In the CSI liturgy the Holy Communion is called the Holy Eucharist or the Lord's supper. Eucharist is a Greek word which means thanksgiving (1 Cor. 14 : 16). We thank God for the gift of Jesus Christ. We thank him for the gift of life, for all our dear ones and for this wonderful universe. The Astronomers tell us that the size of the universe in which we live is incomprehensible to human minds. We ask the question, what is the nature of the power at the heart of the universe ? When we listen to the words 'This is my body which is given for you' and 'This is my blood which is shed for you' in the Holy Eucharist we are told that the power at the Heart of the universe is self-giving goodness. The Holy Eucharist is both a gift and a challenge. Risen Christ gives himself to us in the symbols of bread and wine and we are challenged to show this self-giving goodness of God in the contexts of our own lives.

Calvin, among the reformers, affirmed Christ's presence in the Lord's supper in the work of the Holy Spirit. When we pray 'Come Holy Spirit renew the whole creation' the prayer is partially answered as we take part in the Lord's supper and go out in the contexts of our lives to show to some extent in our own lives as the church the body of Christ the self-giving goodness of God in 'an aggressive way'.

Muslim students of matric, should be withdrawn and be notified by a gazette publication. A new lesson should be re-written by some Christian scholars in the light of Christian faith.

Pakistan television play entitled 'Victoria Francis' which is under production, revolves around an Anglo-Indian family, whose language and culture are different from those Pakistani Catholics. The scene of 'Confession' of 'Victoria Francis', shown as a roman Catholic girl, to a Catholic priest is a misleading and against the practice of the Catholic Church, the PCPA said.

The PCPA General Body meeting-cum one day seminar on 'Pakistan Catholic Press—Challenges for the '90's' would be held on April 20.



# The Power of the Holy Spirit in the Early Church

MRS. SHANTHI PAULRAJ, *Trichy*

Jesus Christ told His disciples that they would receive Power when the Holy Spirit would come upon them. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and received the spiritual power to fulfil their various ministries in the early church.

'And while staying with them, He (Christ) charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, But wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, 'You heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 1 : 4, 5).

It is with the power of the Holy Spirit that the apostles and followers of Jesus Christ fulfilled their ministries in the early church. Paul writes to Corinthians about the power of the Holy Spirit for various ministries in the church.

'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills' (I Corinthians 12 : 7-11).

## I. Power of the Holy Spirit for the Preaching Ministry in the Early Church

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples and believers were filled with the Holy Spirit as per the promise of Lord Jesus Christ and received the Power to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Peter, the Apostle, who was an ordinary fisherman was tremendously empowered by the Holy Spirit with an extraordinary power of eloquence. As a result, the entire audience of nearly 3000 persons believed in the Gospel and accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

### (a) Disciples receiving the Holy Spirit

Jesus was crucified on the cross. Jesus rose again from death, on Easter Sunday, the third day. The disciples could not still be liberated from their fear and disappointment. On Easter Sunday evening, the disciples assembled inside a room with its doors closed for fear of Jews. They were frightened that the Jews who crucified their Master Jesus, might kill them also. They did not dare to move about freely in the streets of Jerusalem. They were afraid of preaching about Jesus Christ. They were in urgent

need of the power of the Holy Spirit to be liberated from their fear and to fulfil the preaching ministry of the early church.

The resurrected Lord Jesus appeared before them inside the closed room and said to them, 'Peace be with you' and liberated them from their fear. Jesus said to them, again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you'. And when he had said this, he breathed to them, and said to them, 'Received the Holy Spirit . . . . ' (John 20 : 22, 23) Jesus told the disciples that He was sending them to fulfil the preaching ministry, as the Father had sent Him. Jesus gave them the power of the Holy Spirit to fulfil the preaching ministry.

### (b) Saul and Barnabas set apart by the Holy Spirit for the preaching ministry

The early church experienced the power of the Holy Spirit for its preaching ministry. 'While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'. Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off' (Acts 13 : 2, 3).

Paul (Saul) and Barnabas started the first missionary journey of preaching with the power of the Holy Spirit. When we look at the history of the church, the evangelists, missionaries, sergeants of God, and preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ have been experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit throughout their preaching ministry, like David Livingstone, Sadhu Sundar Singh, Martin Luther King, C. C. Andrews and so on.

### (c) The Power of the Holy Spirit in Cyprus

Paul and Barnabas who were sent onward by the Holy Spirit in the Missionary journey went to Selucia and from there, they sailed to the island of Cyprus. When they were in Salamis they preached the word of God in Synagogues of the Jews. They went through that whole island as far as Paphos, where they found a man, called Bar-Jesus. He was a Jew and magician. He associated himself with the proconsul named Sergius Paulus. The proconsul invited Paul and Barnabas to preach the word of God. The Magician opposed their preaching and tried to turn the pro-consul away from the faith in Jesus Christ. Paul, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, gazed at the magician and said,

'You son of the devil, you, enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you and you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time' (Acts 13 : 10).



Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him and he became blind. Then the pro-consul believed, when he saw what had happened. Thus, the power of the Holy Spirit was experienced in the early church.

**(d) The Power of the Holy Spirit in the midst of opposition and revolt**

Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch in Pisidia and went into Synagogues and preached the Gospel. The gentiles were very happy to listen to the Gospel of Jesus. But the Jews did not believe in the Gospel and so they stirred up devout and honourable women and the chief men of the city and caused persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their district (Acts 13 : 50).

In the midst of such persecution, opposition and revolt, the Apostles were filled with Joy and with the Holy Spirit. The Apostles were not at all disturbed or confounded because of this dangerous opposition and persecution, but they were very calm, courageous, serene and happy. This was possible for them because of the power of the Holy Spirit.

**II. The Power of the Holy Spirit for the Healing ministry in the early church**

The apostles in the early church fulfilled the healing ministry with the power of the Holy Spirit 'To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit' (I Cor. 12 : 9b).

**(a) Lame Man cured (Acts 3 : 1-10)**

Peter and John went to the temple for prayer at 3 : 08 clock in the afternoon. There was a lame man at the gate and he asked them for alms. Peter told him that he had neither silver nor gold. But he said to him, 'Rise up and walk in the name of Jesus of Nazareth'. At once the lame man was healed miraculously by the power of the Holy Spirit and rose up and walked (Acts 3 : 1-10).

**(b) Dorcas raised from death (Acts 9 : 36-43)**

Tabita, called Dorcas was a faithful disciple in Joppa. She fell ill and died. Her body was washed and kept in an upper room. Two men went to Peter who was at Lydda, near Joppa, and brought him to Joppa. When Peter came, he sent everyone out of the room and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned toward the dead woman and said, 'Tabita Arise'. She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. All others saw her alive and rejoiced.

Many healing miracles were performed by Peter and other apostles.

'So that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed' (Acts 5 : 15-16).

**(c) Lame man at Lystra-Cured (Acts 14 : 8-12)**

There was a lame man at Lystra. He was a cripple from birth. He was listening to the preaching of Paul. Paul found out that the lame man had faith to be healed. Paul said in a loud voice 'Stand upright on your feet,' and he sprang up and walked. When the crowds saw the miracle of healing, they lifted up their voices, and said, 'The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men'.

**(d) Eutychus brought back to life (Acts 20 : 7-12)**

Paul came to Troas and was preaching until midnight in a room on the third floor. A youngman by name Eutychus was sitting in the window and listening to Paul and he was fast asleep and fell from the third floor to the ground. Paul went down and bent over him and embraced him and said, 'Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him'. The young man became alive and the people were all very much comforted.

**(e) Father of Publius healed from fever and dysentery (Acts 28 : 7-9)**

Paul and those who travelled with him in a ship on their way to Rome, suffered from shipwreck and landed on a small island called Malta. Publius was the chief man of the island, and he received Paul and others and entertained them hospitably for three days. His father suffered from fever and dysentery. Paul visited him, prayed and laid hands on him and healed him. All other people, who were sick on that island came to Paul and were healed.

'And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them' (Acts 19 : 1).

**III. The Power of the Holy Spirit for the Teaching Ministry in the Early Church**

The Power of the Holy Spirit was experienced in the teaching ministry of the early church. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles and leaders of the early church to teach the correct doctrines about the faith in Jesus Christ.

'But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit ; to another faith by the same Spirit' (I Corin. 12 : 7-9).

**(a) The Power of the Holy Spirit to save man from sin and to transform his evil nature into holy nature**

How can man be saved and his evil nature be transformed into holy nature? Can man attain salvation and transformation through his efforts and works? Does man have power to do good works to earn salvation? These questions have been puzzling mankind from very early days. The Holy Spirit gave the power and the wisdom to the disciples and apostles, especially to Sr. Paul to discover deeper spiritual truths regarding salvation righteousness, and transformation of evil human nature into holy nature.

St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, Ephesians and Galatians that man could become righteous only through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is the gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

'For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith ; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live' (Romans 1 : 17).

'For by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast' (Ephesians 2 : 8, 9).

'... that a man is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified' (Galatians 2 : 16).



The above verses show that salvation is God's gift and grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not through man's efforts or works. The Holy Spirit enabled and led the leaders in the early church to discover such deeper spiritual truths. The Holy Spirit still continues to lead the church and her leaders to discover such deep spiritual truths in the life and work of contemporary church and society.

Salvation and transformation of man and his evil nature into holy nature is possible only through the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul wrote in his letter to Galatians about the evil nature of man.

'Now the works of the flesh are plain, immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing and the like' (Galatians 5 : 19-20a).

How can this evil nature of man be transformed into holy nature? The power of the Holy Spirit alone can transform evil nature of man into holy nature as we find in the following verse.

'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control' (Galatians 5 : 22-23).

It is only when man abides in Jesus Christ through faith in him that his old evil nature disappears and new nature of holiness (new creation of God's nature) reappears in his life.

'Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come' (II Corinthians 5 : 17).

*(b) The wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit to discover oneness in Christ despite external differences*

To start with, only Jews became Christians and were accepted as members of the church. When the Gospel of Jesus Christ was preached to Gentiles (non-Jews), they also wanted to accept Jesus Christ as their saviour and to become members of the church. The members and leaders of the early church needed the wisdom and the power of the Holy Spirit for the following important decisions:

1. To decide whether Gentiles could be accepted as members of the church or not.
2. To decide whether circumcision a Jewish rite, should be insisted upon, when Gentiles could be accepted as members of the church.
3. To discover the oneness in Christ despite external differences of race, gender and so on.

Peter, the apostle had a vision—a great sheet descended with all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air, there was a voice—'Rise, Peter, kill and eat'. Peter said, 'No Lord, I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean'. The voice said, 'What God had cleansed, you must not call common (unclean)'. This happened three times. Peter was perplexed regarding the meaning of this vision. At that time, a man who was sent by Cornelius, an Italian, a non-Jew, (who was considered as unclean) came to Peter to take him to Cornelius in Caesarea. When Peter was hesitating whether he, being a Jew should go to Cornelius a non-Jew, (considered as unclean) and accept him as a member of the church or not, the Holy Spirit spoke to Peter, 'Behold three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation; for I have sent them'. The Holy Spirit guided Peter that non-Jews also would be accepted as members of the church. Hence, Peter went to Cornelius and accepted him as a member of the church (Acts Chapter 10).

When more Gentiles (non-Jews) wanted to accept Christ as their Saviour, the problem arose whether circumcision, a Jewish rite should be insisted upon, when non-Jews became Christians. The Holy Spirit guided the leaders of the early church that circumcision an external rite should not be insisted upon. When Gentiles became Christians; Gentiles should abstain from blood and meat sacrifice to idols and from unchastity (Acts 15 : 22-29).

'For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things' (Acts 15 : 29).

The Holy Spirit enabled the leaders in the early church to discover oneness in Christ, despite several external differences.

'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3 : 28).

'So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another' (Romans 12 : 5).

The Holy Spirit continues to guide the church even today, to continue to discover the oneness in Christ, despite external differences.

Thus the power of the Holy Spirit was experienced in the life and work of the early church. The Holy Spirit still continues to empower the church in her life and work.

### **Palm Sunday, April 8**

Text Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord (Psalm 118 : 26a, RSV).

#### **Aim**

To encourage a true understanding of Christ's Kingship.

**Introduction** (Recount the story of Palm Sunday-Mark 11 : 1-10)

The traditional greeting of pilgrims to Jerusalem found in Psalm 118 is given special significance when applied to Jesus.

#### **1. The attitude of the Crowd**

At Passover time Jews recalled how God had delivered their forefathers from slavery in Egypt. Many looked to the day when he would provide a more permanent deliverance. The sight of Jesus riding into the city on a donkey struck a chord (see Zechariah 9 : 9). Some made the right responses, but for the wrong reason. We cannot banish emotion from our response to Jesus. Let us be sure however, that our response is grounded in a clear understanding of who he is and what he is about.

#### **2. The action of Jesus**

On the first Palm Sunday Jesus had no need to hide his messianic claims. By riding on a donkey, he declared the kind of Messiah he was not a military leader, but the prince of love and peace. The human way is to force people into submission. (Give examples). However, the ways of God are different. Love does not coerce, it seeks a willing response. (Illustrate from the life of Jesus). This was the way of Jesus to the end; it is God's way still.

#### **3. An afterword**

The cheers of the crowd turned to cries for his blood. For Jesus the day of exultation was soon over but his finest hour was yet to come. So, this royal man rode on through applause, rejection, suffering and death to claim his kingdom for all time and for all humankind.

#### **Conclusion**

Quote the last verse of Henry Hart Milman's hymn, 'Christ on, ride on in majesty'.



# Ecumenical Youth Reflections on Unity

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[This is the last part of a communique from the Youth Working Group of the World Council of Churches. With participants from 23 countries, it met in Cairo.]

... Economic crisis hits most forcefully the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where the majority of the populations are young. The youth are paying for debts of the past with their very future.

Even in the affluent nations, young people face persistent unemployment and a general lack of the resources needed to fully participate in churches, in communities, in struggles.

Our hope lies in the power of faith to transform and unite. Yet, in all places we see divisions wrought by the misuse of religious sentiments in the name of earthly glory and power. This challenges all people of faith, our churches, our communities, and our ecumenical movements to manifest the richness of our shared life, and so to point towards the new heaven and new earth promised us.

In their frustration, the youth of the Middle East embrace those of the whole world. Together, we long for visions of a unity that is rooted in wrestling with the very real divisions that typify our world. In this we are committed to finding the resources, the capabilities, and the support to be able to build ecumenical youth movements relevant to the youth of today, able to meet our frustrations and hopes, and firm in the quest for unity, and the elimination of all that separates us from God and humanity.

The unity we so seek is an authentic unity where peace proceeds from justice, and where the basis of division is challenged along with its manifestation. It is a unity that is not shallow, but whose depth inspires faith, and challenges our young people to believe (John 17:10).

Our meeting has sought to find paths to unity in the programmes and work of the WCC youth, and ecumenical youth movements across the world. We have discussed the importance of bringing together young people in relationships of equality, and solidarity. We look to internships, workcamps, seminars, and study groups as some means to pursue this aim.

Our desire for constructive, prophetic engagement in our churches and our world finds expression in commitments to dialogue, and to involvement in wider ecumenical work and in all places where people gather and seek to bring God's love, and justice to a broken world. We work to enhance our contribution and participation in the ecumenical struggle for unity through projects that gather our experience, our strivings, our prayers, and our history.

In gathering, we have sought to discern the ecumenical visions that will inspire us into the next century. We are committed to a process of global ecumenical youth gathering in which we seek to build common ecumenical witness that shall stand against the divisions of our world. This work, and these visions we ground in the real work of young people inspired by the Spirit that makes us one.

This, then, has been our experience, our reflection, our work, and our planning amidst the spirituality, the frustrations, the struggles and the prayers of youth in the Middle East. To them we offer our prayers and our solidarity.

EPS

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## Dr. Mithra G. Augustine Appointed as New Director of the E.C.C.

The internationally known Ecumenical Christian Centre situated in Whitefield, Bangalore has now a new Director in the person of Dr. Mithra G. Augustine, who was until recently Principal of the Madras Christian College, Tambaram.

The Centre established in 1963 has, during the past 27 years, brought together several thousands of people, Indian and Foreign, of various religious and political persuasions for dialogue and inter-action with the objective of promoting Ecumenism in its wider sense. While it stands for the Unity of the Church, its main emphasis is the promotion of inter-religious understanding and harmony and the wider unity of the humankind, overcoming the rich-poor divide and other divisive factors. It sees the Unity of the Church only as a small symbol of Cosmic Ecumenism.

Apart from international, national and regional conferences, the Centre runs throughout the year short and long term Courses on environmental issues, appropriate technology, inter-church and inter-religious, socio-political and other issues.

Recently the Centre has initiated an Indian School of Ecumenical Theology, unique in Asia with the main purpose of giving training on wider ecumenism to teachers of theological colleges, clergy, teachers in secular colleges and youth leaders. The well known theologian, Rev. Dr. Samuel Rayan is the Principal of the Indian School of Ecumenical Theology.

The Ecumenical Christian Centre is run by all the major Churches in India. Its present Chairman is The Rt. Rev. Frederick D'Souza, Bishop, Jhansi Diocese of The Roman Catholic Church.



# Human Solidarity Club

MR. B. PADMA RAO, Kazipet

Happy child the Nation's Pride—was the slogan raised a few years ago when the nation celebrated the International Year of the Child. But the slogan did not help. The sad plight of the poor children who grow in slums, poverty, burdensome to the helpless parents—often resulting in abandoning them—is simply being continued. The largest beggar groups in India are children—leave alone the child labour force. And many of us are feeling a nuisance and menace to see scores of children beginning in the crowded places like bus-stands and railway stations. But seldom we attempt to do anything for such lot. But the situation in Kazipet, a busy railway junction in Andhra Pradesh, is not a hopeless one.

Responding to the vision and love of Jesus Christ, about a dozen of friends came together to form into a society, calling it, HUMAN SOLIDARITY CLUB with an aim to bring abandoned children together to create in them the awareness of human values of love, self-respect, self-help and social living through formal and non-formal education.

It was Father Vijaya Kumar, a young Catholic priest in Kazipet, who had this vision first. But, realising that to implement action of such a vision atleast a few like-minded committed persons are required, he went around sharing his idea. Already being well versed with the VELCOM—which encourages such coalition—Rev. B. Manikya Rao, Presbyter in Kazipet and Mr B. Padmarao (Synod member) TTE is Kazipet, both belong to the Church of South India, accepted to work with Father Vijayakumar. It was expanded roping in Mr. Sudhakar Reddy, a business man.

The 'Shelter' has 40 boys and girls drawn mostly from the Railway Station. They used to beg in the Station and collect the thrown-out plastic tea cups used by the passengers, wash them and sell them back to the coffee stalls thus making some money. Sometimes they indulge in petty thefts in the trains. Most of the children are abandoned ones, many of them do not know where they have come from. When asked, whether he would like to get back to his native place with the help of the club members, Kasi Viswanath who is said to have come from Mancheryal, a nearby town, his answer was—I do not know anybody there.

All the 40 were given bath by the Youth members of the diocese (R.C.). They were given fresh cloths and warm food was served to them by the youth and members of the club. Some of the boys are now admitted in the nearby school. Some of the Committee members are school Teachers and heads of institutions. They helped children to get seats in Schools. The childrens are provided opportunities to lead a good life. They study, they play games, and learn certain trades like tailoring. Where does the money come from? From local resources, one of the strong arguments of the VELCOM—mobilize local resources Mr. Sudhakar Reddy the Vice-President, Mr. Ravichander, Merchant, Mr. Vijaya Mohan Reddy

the Treasurer, Joint Secretaries B. Padma Rao and Mr. B. Ratna Reddy are all responsible in raising funds, backed by Rev. B. Manikya Rao, Md. Ankushawali and Joseph Sundaram. Mr. G. Raja Reddy donated enough plates and tumblers. Mr. B. Ratna Reddy donated 500 yards of land for constructing a home for the children. Mr. Sudhakar Reddy gives Rs. 500 every month. Both the churches add their mite and make it truly a joint effort to solve the problem—a good example where Church and Society join together to help the poor and needy urchins found in the Station.

## The Love of the Cross

Malayalam Devotional

He who hangs on the cross  
is none other than my beloved :  
Yes. It is he !

1. My soul, look at the awful  
sight of sin.  
Son of God, you have taken  
the curse upon you. But  
Why should you ?
2. Your great love  
have I ignored so long  
in my life. But  
You my God have pardoned  
this great sin of mine.
3. Will I return with passion  
to a life of sin  
any longer ? No.  
I will endeavour to live my life  
as a child of God.
4. Whatever be the misery  
and the loss,  
I will have my mind fixed  
on the love of the cross  
revealed to me.
5. My soul, keep meditating  
on this great love.  
Son of God, you have poured  
your love on me,  
this poor Sadhu.

—SADHU KOCHU KUNJU (1883-1945)

Krūsinmēl Krūsinmēl

English rendering : Dr. T. Dayanandan Francis



# NEWS from All Over . . . .

**TAMIL NADU CHRISTIAN COUNCIL, WORKSHOP ON HEALTH AND WHOLENESS FOR WOMEN**  
13TH—15TH JANUARY, 1990 AT KOTTAR ANIMATORS CENTRE, NAGERCOIL.

Twenty-five delegates from the various churches, viz., C.S.I. ; E.C.I. ; IELC ; ALC and Catholic Mission attended the above workshop. For most of them, this was their first experience of an ecumenical programme. The workshop was jointly organised by the Tamil Nadu Christian Council and the Christian Medical Association of India.

The organisers believed that the Churches in India have the infrastructure and network of institutions that can be channelled to the needs and problems of women from a health perspective. The workshop's main objectives therefore were :

- (1) To educate and sensitise the participants to the issues and concerns on women and health.
- (2) To create an awareness of the wholeness of individual.
- (3) To motivate the Churches in Tamil Nadu to actively involve in women's health and development.

The workshop was inaugurated by Mrs. Sarah Chanda of the YWCA of India. She reminded the women that they were the temples of God and not to forget that being created in His image they had to play a role in the church to make it a fuller community.

Each day was started with devotions on the theme led by Mrs. Sussan Thomas (CMAI) and members from the ALC and CSI. The Bible studies were conducted by Rev. Fr. Gilarious, Director, YCSM, Kottar Diocese, Nagercoil. An ecumenical service was conducted by Rev. P. Novbert (IELC) and message by Rev. Fr. Alphonse. The concluding devotions were led by Dr. Mithra J. Ebenezer, Director, Tamil Nadu Christian Council.

The workshop was divided into three plenary sessions on 'women know Thyself, your Body and your Rights', followed by group discussions. The speakers were Mrs. Saulina Arnold, of the Tamil Nadu Voluntary Health Associations, Madras and Mr. Patturajan, Advocate from Madurai. Mrs. Saulina Arnold in her first talk drew from various theories of Psychology, Sociology and the Scriptures. It helped the delegates to analyse their situations and to know themselves. The physiology of the reproductive system and the beauty of the body was studied from the Biblical perspective.

The group discussions focused on their expectation from the workshop ; what they learnt and what can be done in the Churches ; particularly among the women. The participants expressed their new experience of relating the scriptures to Health and Women's issues. The panel on the Churches' response brought out the problems faced by women of the IELC of not being granted membership and voting rights. The evening hours were spent in highlighting the issues on dowry, abortion and family planning through role plays.

Mr. Patturajan enlightened the workshop on the rights of women from the various rights found in the I.P.C. viz., the maternity benefits ; obscene posters depicting the

women's body in a vulgar way ; husbands beating their wives, etc. He appealed to the Churches, through the women, to study the state of affairs and reach out and rehabilitate the fallen women.

An audio-visual production 'The silent sucam' was screened which showed the destruction and removal of the foetus.

## Recommendations and resolutions

(1) Each participant resolved to take the learning to their Church and community to educate and motivate women and children, pay home visits, prayers and sharing and further ecumenical meetings. The use of street theatre and other mass media to create awareness on Health and wholeness of women were recommended.

(2) The organisers, viz., (CMAI and TNCC) were requested to prepare cassettes on Women's Health from the Biblical perspective as well as Bible studies.

(3) At the recommendation of Mr. Patturajan, it was agreed to request the Tamil Nadu Christian Council to set up a Christian Legal Aid Centre and call upon women's fellowship groups and YWCA to represent the cases of aggrieved women.

The workshop was unique and the first one to bring together the women belonging to the different denominations and it was felt that such workshops and consultations on Women's Health and wholeness for women be organised in the future.

## BIBLE ON TV TO START FROM APRIL

COCHIN—The Bible TV serial being produced by leading South Indian producers 'Navodaya', originally scheduled to be telecast on the national network from this month, is expected to be on the air from April 1990.

Mr. M. C. Punnose popularly known as Appachan, the Navodaya's proprietor said that the National Film Development Corporation Government had constituted a committee to review all the serials sanctioned by the previous government and the serial was also being subjected to the review.

He said he did not think there would be any hitch as expected the 39 episode serial would be telecast from April. Three episodes are already completed and another 36 episodes are under production. The completed episodes are Adam and Eve, Noah's Arc and Tower of Babel, said.

Navodaya plans to issue video cassettes the serial in Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and other Indian languages. The 39 episodes can be brought into 13 video cassettes of 160 minutes each. It also proposes the sale of overseas video rights of the serial either subtitled or dubbed in various foreign languages like English, French, Latin, Italian, Spanish and other languages, he said.

## MRS. CHRISTINE LAZARUS NOMINATED ANGLO-INDIAN MLA

HYDERABAD—Mr. Kishan Kant, Governor Andhra Pradesh has announced that Mrs. Christine Lazarus

APRIL 1990



Lazarus has been nominated to the State Assembly to represent the Anglo-Indian Community.

Mrs. Lazarus, Executive Member of Indian Council of Social Welfare Board has been an outstanding social worker for some years. She is the Vice-President of YWCA, Hyderabad. She is an Associate Secretary of Hansen Council of A.P. and Chairperson of Action for Rural Development. She has been Administrative Manager of Pest Control of India Ltd. for 19 years.

Aged 39, Mrs. Lazarus is now a member of St. Joseph's Cathedral Hyderabad. She was married in 1972 and has two children who are studying. She has been an old student of St. Ann's High School (SSC) Secunderabad. A good Catholic with deep commitment, she has been recommended to the Chief Minister by the local Anglo-Indian Community.

## CNI BISHOP OF DELHI CONSECRATED, INSTALLED

NEW DELHI—Rev. Pritam Benjamin Santram was consecrated and installed as the bishop of Delhi at impressive worship services at the Cathedral Church of the Redemption, here on March 11.

The solemn service of consecration was presided over by the Most Rev. John Elliot Ghose, Moderator, the Church of North India (CNI), and assisted by the

Rt. Rev. Franklin C. Jonathan, Deputy Moderator of CNI the Rt. Rev. W. O. Simon I, Bishop of Agra, the Rt. Rev. Anand Chandu Lal, Bishop of Amritsar, and the Rt. Rev. Maqbul Caleb.

The installation was held in the same Cathedral in the evening. The Rev. Patrick Motilal Priest in-charge of the Cathedral conducted the service and the installation was assisted by the Rev. Salim Sharif, priest in-charge of Free Church (CNI), Parliament Street, New Delhi, and the Rev. Gerald Andrews.

Among those who were present at the service were, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of Orthodox Church, Archbishop Angelo Fernandez of Delhi, the Catholic Church and, Commissioner J. Israel of the Salvation Army.

Born on December 10, 1932, Bishop Pritam B. Santram has a long pastoral experience of nearly 30 years. He has been serving as the General Secretary of the CNI Synod since, 1980, at New Delhi. Before his appointment as the General Secretary he served as a lecturer in Biblical studies at Bishop's College, Calcutta (1970-1980) where he also served as the Principal of Bishop's College (1976-1980).

Since his ordination in 1960 he has served the Church in various capacities and on important committees such

(Contd. on p. 10)

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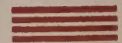
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